


**INFANT STIMULATION: A PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS
OF MULTIPLY-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN**

HV1661

.H63

1973

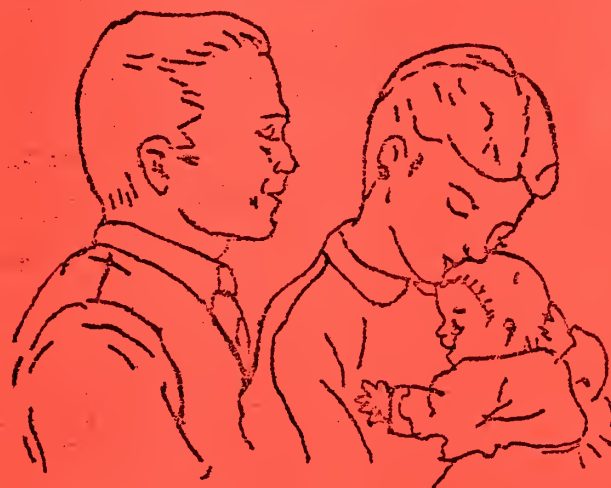


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Lyrasis Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://archive.org/details/infantstimulati00sand>

INFANT Stimulation:

A Pamphlet for Parents of
Multiply - Handicapped Children



Sandra Hoffman
Kansas University Medical Center
July, 1973

INFANT STIMULATION:

A Pamphlet for Parents
of
Multiply-Handicapped Children

Written by

Sandra K. Hoffman

Illustrated by

Marilyn Shumaker

The publication of this pamphlet was supported by funds from the United States Office of Education, Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped, Title VI-C, Public Law 91-230.

Administered by:
Mountain Plains Regional Center for
Services to Deaf-Blind Children
1346 Lincoln
Denver, Colorado 80203

Colorado Department of Education
December, 1973

F O R E W A R D

The Deaf-Blind Program at the Children's Rehabilitation Unit--University Affiliated Facility, Kansas University Medical Center, has been in operation since January, 1971. Since September, 1972, it has been funded as a special education program of Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. This program serves infants and children with multi-sensory impairments on an itinerant basis. The greatest emphasis is in the areas of direct developmental training, parent counseling, and para-professional training.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the babies and their parents who have taught me so much and have made this pamphlet possible.

Sandra K. Hoffman
Teacher/Counselor

C O N T E N T S

Dear Parents	1
Gross Motor Skills	2
Prehension Skills	5
Visual Stimulation	6
Auditory Stimulation	7
Tactile Stimulation	8
Social-Communication Skills	9
Self-Stimulation	11
You, Your Family, Friends, and Strangers	13

Dear Parents,

You have recently learned that your baby is handicapped in some way, and more than likely you want something to do to help him. You will later have special activities to do related to your child's specific handicap, but here are activities that can benefit your child no matter what his disability. Choose the items that your baby is ready for and give him the opportunities to learn them.

Don't be discouraged if your baby does not progress at the rate you think he should. If you are providing the opportunities he needs for learning he will progress as fast as he is able to. Use your imagination to fit these activities to your child and to develop new activities.

My hope is that in this pamphlet you will gain some ideas of what to do to help develop your child's abilities as fully as possible.

Sandra Hoffman

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

This is the skill area that will be most important to you the parents because the developmental milestones every parent watches for involve motor skills. Indeed, a child spends much of his early energy learning the steps between holding his head up and walking independently. Ideally someone will be giving you some specific ideas about how to help your individual child achieve these milestones, but here are some general activities you can try in the meantime.

1. Place your baby on his tummy much of the time he is lying down. Activities like creeping, crawling, and pulling up are done in or from the prone position.
2. Encourage him to hold his head up in both the prone and vertical positions.
 - a. With the baby on his tummy, place your face down close to his, talk to him, and smile.
 - b. Place him on his stomach over your lap with his head hanging over. Gently stroke the back of his neck and back.
 - c. Lie on your back and place the baby on your chest with your faces near. Encourage him to lift his head by talking and smiling.
 - d. Place him on his tummy and hold objects up for him to see, eg., a light and brightly colored toys.
 - e. With the baby sitting on your knee, gently bounce him up and down.
 - f. With him sitting on your lap or on the floor tilt him gently forwards, backwards, and sideways. Watch for him to keep his head with the rest of his body rather than let it lag.
 - g. Do sit ups with him, pulling him gently to a sitting position and then letting him down.
3. Slowly roll him over and over on a blanket on the floor. Then encourage him to roll over by placing a desired object just out of his reach.

4. Encourage your child to sit by propping him with pillows, sitting him in swings, strollers, feeding tables, the corner of a cardboard box, etc.



5. Place the child in front of you on the floor with his hands on the floor in front of him or on his knees. Gently hold his hands there and stroke his back.
6. Show your baby how to assume a sitting position by moving him through the motions of pushing with his arms to sit up and then show him how to lie back down.
7. Encourage him to move across the floor on his tummy by holding a toy just out of his reach.
8. Place him on his hands and knees and show him how to hold his head up in this position and to rock back and forth. Then hold an object just out of his reach and encourage him to move toward it. Place him over a cylindrical bolster and encourage him to crawl over it.



9. Show your child how to pull himself up into a kneeling position and then give him the opportunity to do so by placing an object in a chair just out of his reach.
10. In the same way show him how to pull to a standing position repeatedly and then encourage him to do so on his own.



11. Hold him in a standing position and try to get him to take steps. As soon as he has enough balance to walk with only his hands held, hold his hands while walking backwards in front of him rather than hold his hands over his head.
12. Gradually fade away your assistance until your child is walking independently. Some ideas for fading assistance are using a broom handle, a rope, a towel tied around his waist, and giving him one finger to hold on to.
13. With a physician's approval take your baby swimming as soon as you can. Water is a great relaxant and exerciser. Water activities include kicking, splashing, dunking, etc. Water play can also be done in the bathtub.
14. Move him through gross body movements such as log rolls, somersaults, jumps, whirls, and calisthenics.
15. Encourage your child to run and climb, showing him how first and then giving him the opportunity to practice while you supervise.

PREHENSION SKILLS (USE OF THE HANDS)

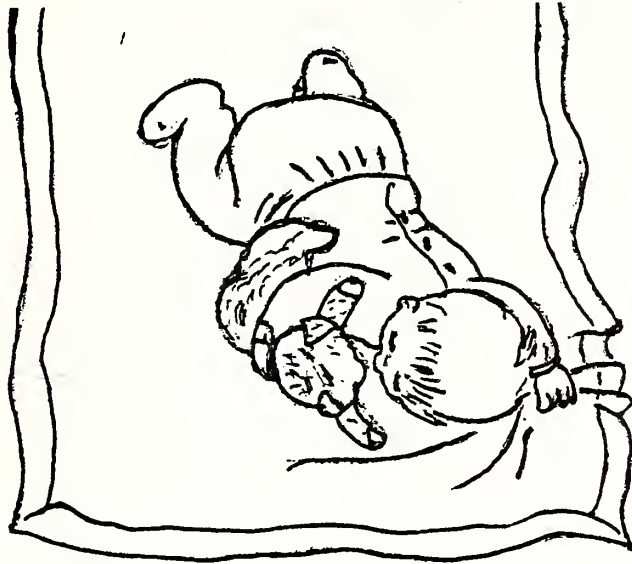
A person's hands are two of the most important parts of his body. Your baby needs to learn to use his hands in order to explore and manipulate most of his environment. If your child has impaired vision his hands are of added importance. He cannot use his eyes to learn about objects so he must be quite adept at using his hands.

1. Show your baby that he has two hands by bringing them together in front of him. Do this until he is able to bring them together himself and will perhaps take them both to his mouth or play with his fingers. Playing pat-a-cake is often a good way to make him aware of his two hands.



2. Provide your baby with some toys small enough for him to grasp easily, eg., small light-weight rattles. Place the toy in his hand until he is able to grasp it for lengthened periods of time. Then hold it touching his hand until he can open his hand and grasp it on his own. Gradually move the toy away encouraging him to reach for it.
3. Try to always present a toy to the child at his midline--in front of him at chest or waist level. In this way he learns to keep his hands oriented in front of him and below shoulder level.
4. Place his hands together in front of him on a toy until he is able to spontaneously bring both of his hands together on it. Then encourage him to reach for the object. Bigger toys may be used here.
5. Provide your baby with interesting objects and toys to manipulate. When you look for toys for him, look for "cause and effect" toys--he does something and something happens, eg., rattles, Busy Boxes, squeeze toys, toys with objects inside, tops, jack-in-the-boxes, Surprise Boxes, pounding toys, etc. Choose whichever toys are appropriate for your child.

6. After he is past the teething stage, encourage your child to explore with his hands and/or eyes rather than his mouth.
7. As your child grows older and becomes more skillful, provide him with manipulative type toys along with the gross motor toys, eg., peg boards, crayons, beads to string, etc.



VISUAL STIMULATION

Unless you are certain that your baby is totally blind, he needs to be stimulated visually. Sometimes it is difficult to tell how much a small baby does or does not see, and it is only through continuous stimulation that he shows us that he can respond to some visual stimuli.

1. Hang brightly colored mobiles over the child's crib and playpen. These need not be "store bought," but can be creations of your own. Many items found around your home can be turned into intriguing mobiles.
2. Place an unbreakable mirror on the bars of the crib or playpen, or hold the baby where he can see himself in a mirror.



3. Move objects slowly back and forth, up and down, in circular motions, etc., in front of him so that he can learn to follow objects with his eyes.
4. If your child has only minimal vision or light perception, be sure that there is plenty of light around him. If he can see light he can probably see the shadow of something hung between him and the light. Place his crib or playpen by a window and hang objects from the crib bars. Use a flashlight to encourage him to learn to follow a light beam with his eyes.
5. Glittering objects may also attract attention, eg., aluminum pie tins made into mobiles, prisms, and silver bells.
6. Move him around the house to "where the action is"—let him watch the family activities.

AUDITORY STIMULATION

1. Even though you may feel strange talking to a tiny baby, talk to your baby as much as you can.
2. Play games with him combining touch with words or sounds. Look for him to anticipate the game from just hearing the words.
3. Use speech that is appropriate for the situation. When you pick him up, say "Up"; when you feed him, say "Eat"; etc. Try to be consistent in the words you use.

4. Expose your child to different sounds and always identify them, eg., ring a bell and say "Bell", the telephone rings and you say "Telephone", and a dog barks and you say "Dog".
5. Use noisemakers such as a bell or squeaky toy and sound them to each side of your child. Help him to turn his head to find the object that made the sound.
6. As soon as your child begins to vocalize start repeating the sounds back to him immediately after he makes them.
7. If your baby has impaired hearing he still needs to be stimulated auditorily. In fact he needs more stimulation. Even though you think he cannot hear you, keep talking to him and providing various sounds for him to hear. Let him feel the radio or TV to feel the vibrations. Then turn it off and let him feel it. Let him feel your throat and mouth when you talk to him.



TACTILE STIMULATION--BODY AWARENESS

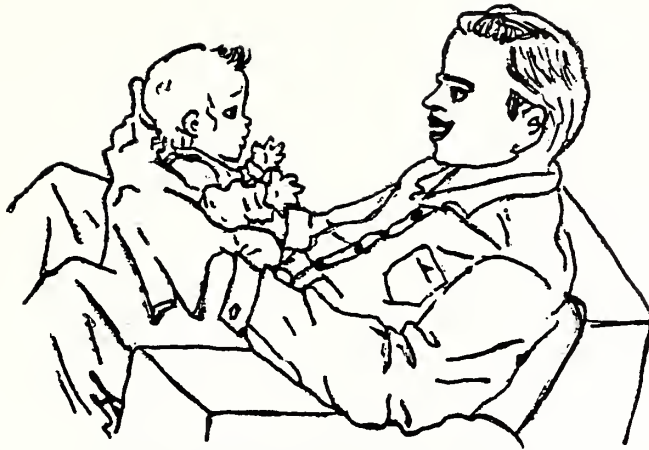
The world is made up of many different textures. Almost everything we touch feels different. Your child may not be able to move around freely and so may not come in contact with many of these textures. They must be presented to him. If he is introduced to different textures now he will not be frightened upon contact with them later.

1. Select toys for your child which have interesting and different textures, eg., fur, soft rubber, hard rubber, plastic, and wood.
2. Many interesting objects are already in your home. Give them to your child to feel. Examples: scouring pads, sandpaper, cotton, sponges, spools, powder puffs, and feather dusters.

3. Touch your child on various parts of his body with these items. Show him then how to find the object with his hands by locating where it touched him.
4. Infant art projects can be undertaken using various media found in your home. Let your child finger paint with whipped cream, chocolate pudding, and shaving cream on the tray of his highchair. Let him play with peanut butter, jelly, and scotch tape. A child must be able to tolerate messy fingers before he will be able to feed himself with his fingers.
5. Help your baby find his feet, his hair, his nose, mouth, etc. Start by touching the body part yourself and saying its name. Then take your child's hand and guide it to the body part. Later show him his nose and then your nose, his hair and then your hair.
6. Help him learn about his body by sticking masking tape on various parts of his body and helping him find it and remove it. Crumple a piece of paper and stick it inside his clothes. Encourage him to find it and remove it.
7. If the baby rejects some textures, continue persisting gently. Many children do not like fuzzy stuffed animals but if these toys are presented to them consistently, they can learn to tolerate them and perhaps even enjoy them.

SOCIAL-COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. You may notice when you first bring your baby home that he does not like to be held or cuddled. This does not reflect on your handling and he can probably learn to at least tolerate cuddling, if not to like it. Gently insist that he be held for short periods at first and gradually lengthen the periods. Hold him when you feed him--this is when children are usually most contented. The more he is left to lie alone the greater will become his aversion to being held. This does not mean to hold him all the time by any means, but when you want to hold him, do so.
2. Hold your baby close to your face and talk to him using interesting facial expressions. Encourage him to touch your face by placing his hands on your face. Play games with him, such as peek-a-boo and pony-boy, that require two people.



3. Start early to identify yourself to your child. Each parent or person involved with the child can choose something special that they, and only they, do with the child. This will help the child learn to discriminate between people. Examples of this are that only mother kisses baby on the nose, and only daddy rubs his face with his whiskers.
4. Start giving your baby signs for activities. He can learn that when his clothes are removed and he is carried down a hall, he is to have a bath; when his bib is placed on him, he is going to be fed; when daddy pats him on the head, it means daddy is leaving, etc.
5. Expose your child to different people and situations. Don't keep him isolated. Leave him with a babysitter once in awhile, take him to the grocery store and restaurant. Only when he is in the situation can he learn appropriate behavior for it.
6. Watch for signs your child may give you to mean that he wants something. At first he will cry when he is thirsty, then he may go to the sink and cry. He then may lead you to the sink, and finally he may verbalize or sign in some way to you that he wants water. When these signs appear be sure you are there to give him what he has asked for.
7. Teach him "no" by combining the word with shaking your head, frowning, and perhaps slapping his hands. Whatever you choose to do, do it consistently.

8. A child learns to understand what he hears usually before he learns to express himself. Your child will learn to respond to words and commands, either verbal or gestured, before he learns to speak. Don't try to skip steps and expect him to be further along than he is.



"BAD HABITS"--SELF-STIMULATION

Many children may engage in rather "bizarre", stereotyped behaviors such as rocking, head nodding, light gazing, hand gazing, head banging, finger flicking, jerking, hand biting, etc. These behaviors should not be allowed to continue to any great extent. You cannot watch your child every minute, but when you are with him try to be consistent with what you do. There are basically two reasons, I believe, for eliminating these behaviors: 1) Some are actually harmful to the child, and 2) If a child is engaged in self-stimulatory behavior, it very often prevents him from engaging in appropriate types of responses. There are various methods to use to eliminate these behaviors. Try them and choose the ones that work with your child.

1. When your child initiates this type of behavior, try to substitute another activity, eg., if he is finger flicking, give him a toy to keep his hands busy.
2. Use safety and preventive devices, such as a helmet on the head, arm restraints, mittens on the hands, etc.
3. Physically restrain him by holding him tightly until he calms down.
4. Actively punish the behavior with whatever punishment works best with your child, spanking, hand slapping, going to his room, etc. If this method is used, only work on one or two behaviors at a time to avoid using too much punishment at one time.

YOU, YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND STRANGERS

You the parents are the most important people in your child's life, so be good to yourselves. There are many things to do with your baby, but you must have time for yourselves. Get a babysitter and spend the afternoon shopping, the evening dancing, or the weekend at the lake. You will be more effective as parents and as teachers if you are relaxed and rested.

If you have other children try to achieve a balance in your attention to them, and to the handicapped baby. Let them help with their brother or sister's care and training--don't shut them out. If they are allowed to participate and not forced or rejected they will learn to appreciate their sibling and the things he learns to do. Allow your handicapped child to be part of the family and to participate in family activities; however, if there is an outing which would be enjoyed more if the handicapped child were not included, don't feel guilty about taking an occasional outing without him.

You may run into family and friends who do not understand your child's problems or the activities you are doing with him. Their actions and comments may hurt or anger you but remember that they only act that way because they don't understand. For the most part it is up to you to help them understand. Explain to them the child's problems and what you are doing to help him. But remember that you are the parents and it is up to you to make the decisions concerning your child, even though you may receive much advice about what you "should do."

You also may receive stares, questions, and comments from complete strangers. At these moments it is only natural to feel angry or embarrassed. Respond to them in the manner that is most comfortable to you, ie., ignore them, comment briefly, or answer their questions in detail.

Try to remember and to convince others that your handicapped child is first a child, and second, handicapped. When in doubt about what to do in a given situation, treat him as you would any other child.



For information write to:
Sandra K. Hoffman
CRU-UAF
Kansas University Medical Center
Kansas City, Kansas 66103

4/5/2012

2574024 11

00

HF GROUP - IN

T



